

# THE REHEARSAL.

1. How the Church is the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.
2. Not only as to her Doctrine, but her Authority. Which she cannot Transfer or Compromise.
3. Errors in Doctrine always follow the Invasion of the Authority of the Church. Shew'd in the Church of Rome. And in our late Confusions.
4. More Dreadfull Heresies and Blasphemies now, then there were then. Our Camislar-Quakers.
5. The Story of Emlin the Socinian, now keeping a Meeting-House in London.

SATURDAY, January 17. 1707.

(1.) Rehearsal. **F**rom what you said last, Country-man, of the Contempt of Religion following the Contempt of the Priesthood, you may learn the meaning of that Text. 1. Tim. iii. 15. Where the Church is call'd the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.

Country-man. Is the Church so the Pillar and Ground of the Truth, as to be the Author of it, and that the Truth of the Gospel do's Depend upon the Authority of the Church.

Rehearsal. No, Country-man, the Gospel is the Revelation which Christ gave to the Church. He is the Author of it, and it stands upon His Authority. But he has left this Sacred Depositum with the Church to keep. The Church is to Teach the Truth and to Preach it; to Watch against Errors and Heresies that are Contrary to it, to Confute them, and when Necessity requires to Restrain them with the Spiritual Sword of Discipline and that Authority which Christ has left with her, to Cut off Rotten Members from the Body, that the Infection spread no further; and to Graft them in again upon their Repentance and Amendment. This is what we call the Power of the Keys, to Open and to Shut, to Admit into the Society, and to Exclude out of it. And forasmuch as Heaven and Earth are one Family, and the Church the same in Both under the same Head which is Christ, He calls this Power which He has left with his Church upon Earth, the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, That who are justly Excluded His Church upon Earth, stand likewise Excluded in Heaven, as He has Expressly Promis'd.

(2.) Thus the Church is the Pillar and Ground of the Truth, not only as Teaching it, but Supporting and Preserving it by that Authority with which Christ has Invested her. Therefore the Apostle directs the Bishops of the Church to Speak and Exhort and Rebuke with all Authority, and to let no man despise them. Tit. ii. 15. Not to Prostitute their Authority, or Give it up to any, for Christ gave them no more than he saw was needfull for the Government of His Church, and the Support of the Truth. Therefore if they Part with any of it, or Compromise it away, upon any pretence whatsoever, they Betray their Trust, and Render themselves Un capable to Preserve the Truth, which will be Requir'd at their Hands. This made St. Cyprian say, *Quam periculosum sit in rebus Divinis, ut quis a Jure suo et Potestate recedat.* How dangerous it was in Divine things that any shou'd Recede from his full Right and Authority. Therefore the Apostle exhorts to Put on the whole Armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil; For we Wrestle not only against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darknes of this World, against Wicked Spirits in High Places. Eph. vi. 11, 12. These are Potent Enemies and shall the Church then lessen her Authority with which she is to Fight against these? Shall she deliver up her Power into their hands? And surrender to Them the Sword of the Spirit, which was Committed to Her to Defend the Truth?

(3.) And observe it, Country-man, That wherever this has been done, Wherever the

the Power of the Church has been Lessen'd or Transfer'd, there the Truth has suffer'd proportionably. Thus when the Pope wou'd Transfer to himself the Power of the whole Catholick Church, and Reduce all Bishops under him, as his Deputies and Substitutes, and had Transfer'd the Episcopat into the Pontificat, what Errors in Doctrin and Heresies did Enſue, even to Idolatry?

And thus when the Episcopat was overthrown in England, in the late Times, and Transfer'd into the Hands of the People, what Swarms of Heresies arose, like Locusts out of the Pit, and Darken'd the Face of the whole Land? Three or Four Score different Religions at the same time in England, of which we have the Names transmitted to us in Books then wrote, particularly in *Heresiography*, and *Gangrena*.

(4.) I wish I cou'd say they had ended there. They all Disappear'd (except three or four of Chief Name) upon the Restoration of Episcopacy in 1660. And we heard no more of them for near thirty Years. But we have since seen a large Crop of them Rising up again. Not yet so Many in Number, but Greater in Wickedness than any of the Former. None of them were so Senseless and Blasphemous as our Celebrated Book of the Rights, to make the Authority of God Himself to be Deriv'd from the People. None of these Mad Enthusiasts ever Stumbl'd upon the *Horeb-Contract*. They were not given up to so Foolish a Delusion. There was no *Aggill* among them, or *Conard* that I heard of. No, nor a *Tuchin*, to call the Holy Scriptures, Wither'd Branches, and Blaspheme them as *Pawwawing*, that is, the Inspiration of the Devil! There were none who said, that Christ Deserv'd to Die the Death of a Slave! As our Growth of *Deism*, Recommended in the Book of the Rights. There were none of the *Headly Moderation*, to make all Religions indifferent, and charge our Delusions upon God! There were no Profess'd *Deists*, who throw off all Revelation, and set up what they call *Natural Religion* in its Place. For *Natural Religion* and *Deism* are the self same thing. None then said he had been in an Higher Heaven than that into which Christ has Ascended, as I have heard *Jean Leads* the Mother of the *Philadelphians* say. None then Blasphem'd so loud as our *Camisat-Quakers* who not only say they are sent by God, and speak in His Name, which is the stile of the Prophets, but they Assume His Person, and say He speaks by moving their Organs, without their own Consent or Knowledge, and that He speaks in them, and to themselves, as well as to others. A Person of Veracity told me he saw one of them, in their Meeting, take another of them by the Arm,

and looking Broad in his Face, said, Do you not acknowledge me to be the Eternal and ever-living God? To which the other Answer'd, falling down and Trembling, I do acknowledge you to be the Eternal and Ever-living God. Their Excuse is, That it is not Themselves who speak the Words, but God who speaks in them. But this Aggravates the Blasphemy instead of Lessening it.

(5.) Country-m. These are sad Accounts, Master, of the Heresies and Blasphemies of our Times. But I will tell you another thing, there is one Emlin who was a Presbyterian Preacher in Dublin, but spew'd out by them for his Socinianism, and (to their Honour I speak it) they Prosecuted him also at the Law for it, and he was Fined and Imprison'd. But he found means to Escape, and came over hither, and for these several years has kept a Publick Meeting-House in London, as he still do's. And one of his Congregation (I was told his Name) is gon over to the Camisars, but still keeping Close to his Socinianism. And I have a Book generally said to be written by this Emlin since he came over hither, which is Reckon'd a Master Piece of Socinianism. And I know where he Lodges, if any body has a mind to speak with him. In the Life of Mr. Thomas Firmin it is told to his Honour, That he had a Design to have a Socinian Church or Meeting set up in London. And now we see it brought to pass, by way of Moderation!

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